Fig. 1. Location of California bighorn sheep seen during the June 1993 census. Observation numbers are keyed to counts and classification in Table 3.
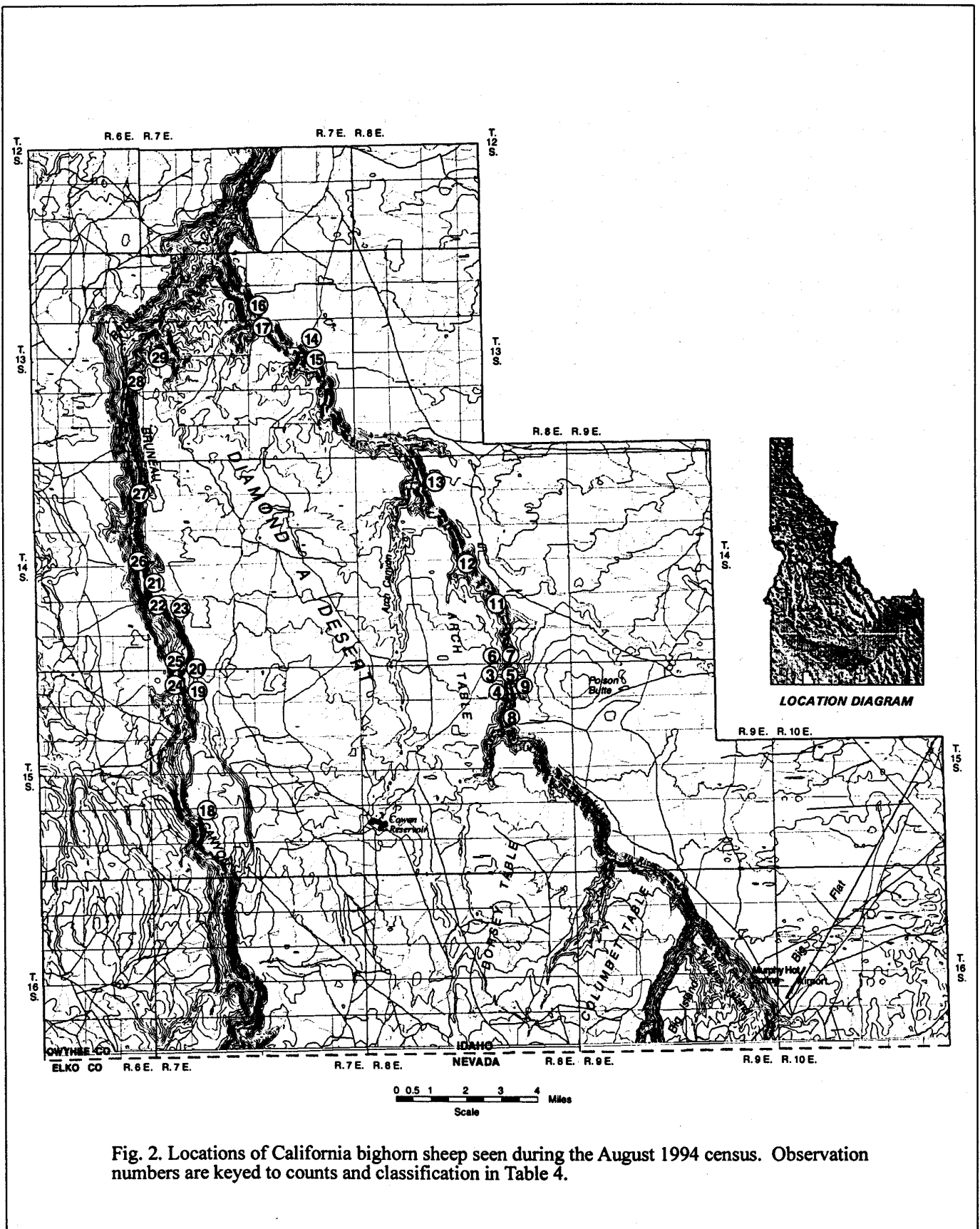
Fig. 2. Locations of California bighorn sheep seen during the August 1994 census. Observation numbers are keyed to counts and classification in Table 4.

Habitat evaluation:

We evaluated more than 110,000 acres of potential bighorn sheep habitat along the Bruneau
River, Jarbidge River, Dorsey Creek, Sheep Creek and Clover Creek. The evaluated area was
divided into 22 blocks each containing uniform habitat features (Fig. 3). The rank of each habitat
block along with the total score, the number of acres in the block, and the limiting factors is
shown in Table 2. The count and classification of each group of bighorn sheep seen during 1993
and 1994 is shown in Tables 3 and 4, respectively.

Physical factors (slope, access and lambing habitat) were found to be limiting the bighorn
population in 17 habitat segments. Biological factors (vegetation and livestock use) were
limiting in 15 segments. Nine segments were limited by both physical and biological factors.
Other potential limiting factors included military activities (1 segment) and water availability (2
segments).

Limiting factors were livestock use, lambing habitat, accessibility, water and slope. Livestock
use was the most common limiting factor (8 of 11 blocks) and typically consisted of heavy cattle
grazing either on the plateau next to the canyon or in the riparian area along the river. The
second most limiting habitat factor was lambing habitat which was limited in 6 of 11 habitat
blocks. Accessibility and water were each limiting in two of 11 cases. Slope (size not steepness)
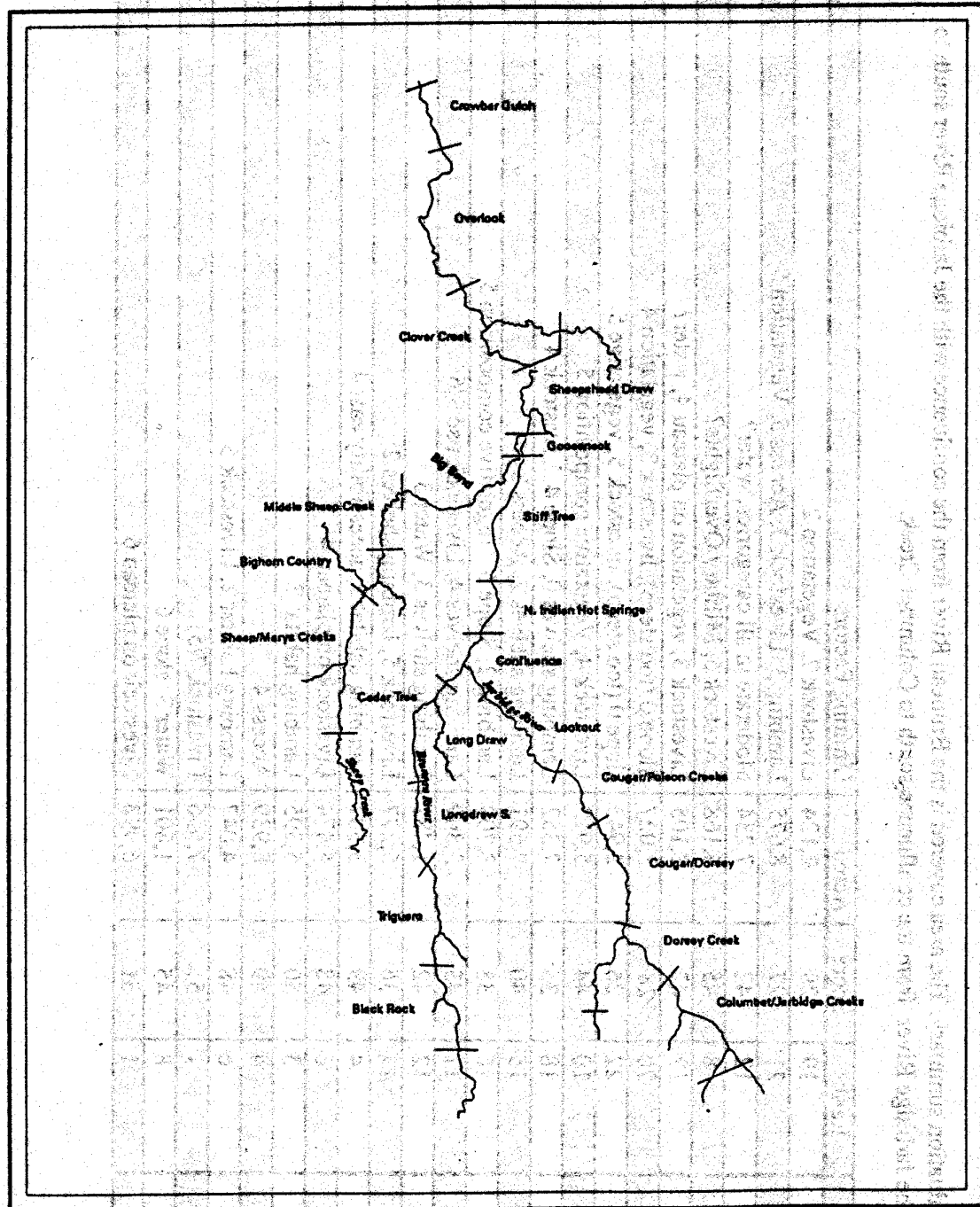was limiting in one block.

Fig 3. Habitat blocks evaluated for suitability for bighorn sheep in Owyhee County, Idaho.